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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RPO DUBAI 000439

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [IR](#)

SUBJECT: IRAN: OBSCURE ROYALIST GROUP DRAWS REGIME DEATH SENTENCES

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CLASSIFIED BY: Alan Eyre, Director, Iran Regional Presence  
Office, DOS.

REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Reports from Iran indicate that as many as five people listed in the indictments issued in the wake of post-election unrest have been sentenced to death by Tehran revolutionary courts. Though details surrounding the individual cases are murky the convictions do not in fact appear to be tied to the political turmoil that followed the presidential election; rather, the government accuses four of the five of having links to an obscure monarchist group called the Anjoman-e Padehshahi Iran ("Iran Empire Society"), while the fifth man was found guilty of membership in the Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK). In announcing the first three death sentences on October 10, a Tehran Judiciary spokesman they have the right to appeal. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) On October 10, two days after reformist websites reported that a Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced Mohammad Reza Zamani to death, Tehran Judiciary official Bashiri Rad told the semi-official news agency ISNA that three men, whom he identified only by their initials, had been sentenced to death. According to Bashiri Rad, two of the men were linked to a monarchist group called Anjoman-e Padeshahi Iran ("Iran Empire Society") and the third had ties to the MEK. One set of initials matched Zamani, who was accused in second post-election show on August 8 of colluding with "American forces in Iraq" and the Iran Empire Society to "instigate riots" during and after the election. Zamani and Arash Rahamipour, whose initials are also a match, jointly 'confessed' on state television in mid-August to having trained with American intelligence officers in Iraq, who in turn put them in touch with Israeli agents.

¶3. (C) On October 12 and 13, news of two more death sentences emerged via reformist websites. Both Hamid Rouhinejad and Davoud Mir-Ardebili are reportedly accused of links to the Iran Empire Society. According to a report sourced to persons "in touch" with Mir-Ardebili since his incarceration in Tehran's Evin Prison, he denies any links to monarchist organizations but has prepared reports about labor rights issues in Iran that were broadcast on a radio station based in Iraqi Kurdistan.

¶4. (C) According to a report by a credible human rights organization based outside of Iran, the IRIG has two files related to charges against people associated with the Iran

Empire Society. The first file contains nine names, including Zamani, Rahamipour, Rouhinejad, and Mir-Ardebili along with five others who are also presumably being tried on similar charges. According to the human rights group, the second file contains charges against three unnamed person.

#### Iran Empire Society

15. (C) IRPO contacts characterize the Iran Empire Society as a fringe organization that was headed up a "crackpot" exile based out of London who went by the name Fouladvand and who reportedly disappeared on the Turkey-Iraq border in 2007. For a time he broadcast a television show out of London. The tenor of the programming was slanted heavily against Islam and in favor of a restoration of the monarchy in Iran, leading some observers to hypothesize that the organization was in fact a creation of the IRIG to discredit monarchists by making them look like lunatics at best and terrorists at worst. "If it in fact existed," noted an Iranian political analyst, "it had a handful of members at most and we'll never know if these men had any association with the group."

16. (C) COMMENT: Though the conspiracy allegations put forward by the government tie into their efforts to link the post-election unrest to a foreign hand, details emerging about the cases indicate the five individuals sentenced to death are not associated with reformist intellectuals targeted by the government after the disputed election. In fact, the indictment against Zamani states he was arrested several weeks before the June 12 election. Though the government is unlikely to provoke further unrest by executing "mainstream" political prisoners associated with the election, it does have a record of putting accused 'foreign agents' to death (most recently, Ali Ahstari,

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who was convicted of espionage for Israel and hanged in November 2008). It is currently unclear whether the government would seek to implement this sentence. END COMMENT  
EYRE